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state. Acting under this power the board of control prepared and submitted to the last legislature, a budget for the fiscal year 1913 and 1914. The recommendations of the board of control were accepted in their entirety, although some additional appropriations were also made by the legislature. Attempts were made to secure legislation which would more completely place the budget in the hands of the board, but no new legislation in this direction was enacted. The board, however, with such power as it possesses, plans to develop a still more efficient method in its next report to the legislature.

Oregon passed in the last legislature, probably, the most comprehensive budgetary law yet enacted by any state of the Union. This law not only provides that financial reports be filed with the secretary of state by all state officers, departments, boards, commissions and institutions, which shall give in detail the amounts appropriated for the current and next preceding biennial period; which shall give the amounts needed for all the departments of the state government for the ensuing biennial period, with reasons therefor; and which shall give an estimate of the probable revenues from all sources for the ensuing biennial period, arranged in detail by classifications and appropriate summaries; but the law also provides for the classification of the needs of the various departments under four headings: (a) Current expenditures; (b) Permanent improvements; (c) All other expenditures; (d) Contingencies.

The secretary of state is empowered, on or before December 15, of each even year, to prepare, upon the basis of the reports submitted to him, a budgetary statement of the several amounts asked for, together with the reasons therefor; the total for each department, board, commission, institution or undertaking, and the grand total. The statement must also contain the estimates of income for the fiscal period. The secretary of state is required to submit this tabulated statement to the members of the legislature and to the governor. The governor, then, is obliged to transmit the statement to the legislature with such recommendations as he may deem proper.

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**State Purchasing Agent:** Improved business methods in connection with state affairs are being rapidly adopted by the various states. The creation of state purchasing agents is one method. The legislatures of New Hampshire and Vermont recently created such an office. In New

Hampshire this office was provided for in a new law which created a board of control to have supervision of all state eleemosynary institutions. This board of control is made up of the governor, the secretary of the state board of charities, the purchasing agent and two other persons appointed by the governor.

The purchasing agent is appointed for three years by the governor and receives a salary of three thousand dollars. He has power to make contracts for and to purchase all supplies and materials needed by the eleemosynary institutions of the state, or by the various state departments, including equipment of any buildings at any state institution. He also purchases all clothing and wearing apparel or materials therefor, provided by the state for inmates of certain institutions.

The board of control acts with the purchasing agent in the matter of construction of new or the repair of old buildings. The board of control may direct that the agent submit to competitive bids any purchases where the amount exceeds two hundred dollars. Provision is made in the law with respect to character of contracts and requirement of bond of contractor. The purchasing agent in conjunction with the state auditor is authorized to require state institutions to adopt a uniform system of accounting for supplies and materials.

The governor and council in their power to organize the board of control has established in detail the methods that shall govern the board and the purchasing agent. The purchasing agent is required to obtain from the seller of goods triplicate bills, one of which is to be delivered to the head of the institution or department on whose account the goods are purchased, one is to be delivered to the state auditor while the third bill is to be retained by the agent. The auditor must give notice of any error which he may discover. The institution or department must report to the purchasing agent the delivery of the articles so purchased, and as to whether they comply with the specifications and are otherwise satisfactory. Upon receipt of this information the purchasing agent shall pay the bill and charge the amount to the department or institution using the goods. The purchasing agent has advanced to him twenty-five thousand dollars as a working capital with which to pay for goods.

The law of Vermont is similar to that of New Hampshire. The state purchasing agent is appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate. He holds office for two years and receives twenty-five hundred dollars per year. He is empowered to contract for and purchase all fuel, water, light, provisions, supplies, material and equipment, including sup-

plies and materials for the construction and equipment of new buildings, used in connection with the various state institutions and for all state departments and officials.

He is also authorized to purchase clothing and wearing apparel for the inmates of the public institutions. When there is need of materials or supplies in excess of \$500, for any institution or department, the purchasing agent is required to advertise for sealed proposals to furnish such materials. The purchasing agent makes such requisition as may be necessary from time to time upon the auditor of accounts, for the necessary funds to carry out the provision of the act. He is required to render an account monthly to the auditor of all expenditures of his department for the preceding month. He is obliged to give a bond to the state of \$20,000 with sureties approved by the governor; and to report biennially to the general assembly a detailed account of all contracts made by him, the name of the party with whom, the purpose for which they were made and the amount paid on each contract. He must also render a detailed statement of all the supplies, provisions, materials and equipment furnished the several institutions, departments and officials and an inventory of all property belonging to the state at the several state institutions and state departments under his control on the first day of July preceding the biennial session of the legislature. The provisions of the act do not apply to the military department and the Soldiers' Home.

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**Efficiency and Economy in State Government:** In a number of States important investigations have recently been made, or are now under way, with a view to securing greater efficiency and economy in state administration. In most instances, emphasis is being placed on the organization and consolidation of the heterogeneous and confusing list of state boards, bureaus and commissions, as a necessary preliminary step towards an efficient and economical management of state business.

The New Jersey economy and efficiency commission was established in 1912, to consider methods for consolidating different departments of the state government whose duties are intimately related. It consists of two members of each House, and three citizens, appointed by the governor, all serving without salaries. The work of this commission was discussed at a conference called by the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce in December.